

EDITORIAL

MOVING; WHITHER?

By DANIEL DE LEON

A DECEMBER 25 Pittsburg despatch announces that, a strike being expected early in the new year at the Schoenville Pressed Steel Car Company plants, the police are preparing to confiscate the rifles and ammunition which the workingmen of the Company are said to have in their homes.

Hitherto, when some flagrant violation of the Constitution and the Laws was contemplated against the land's proletariat by those supposed to have the observance of Law and Constitution in charge, the contemplation of the crime was kept secret, and, when commission had followed contemplation, that much homage was paid to Constitution and Law that the criminal officials would deny the fact, and seek to place their victims in criminal light. It seems to be otherwise now—judging from the Pittsburg despatches.

The Constitution expressly provides: "The right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed." The history of this clause underscores it. It is one of the first amendments to the Constitution that experience dictated. It is a clause with a history such as clusters around few others. The principle that dictated the amendment and its adoption is summed up in one of the arguments made in its favor—"A free people is an arms-keeping and arms-bearing people."

To enter the domiciles of orderly citizens, and confiscate the arms of their tenants is not merely the violation of a Constitutional guarantee; it is worse than that, it is the violation of a principle of freedom; it is worse still, it is an assault upon the rights of those who set up and uphold the government.

Yet all this the Pittsburg police are coolly planning to do; and they frankly announce their purpose; and, most astonishing of all, the press publishes the news without criticism, and with "coloring" that glaringly denotes approval.

Things are moving—moving—moving. They are moving fast—faster—still faster.

Whither?

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